Awake!

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APRIL 8, 1968

THE REASON FOR THIS MAGAZINE

News sources that are able to keep you awake to the vital issues of our times must be unfettered by censorship and selfish interests. "Awake!" has no fetters. It recognizes *facts, faces facts, is free to publish facts. It is not bound* by political ties; it is unhampered by traditional creeds. This magazine keeps itself free, that it may speak freely to you. But it does not abuse its freedom. It maintains integrity to truth.

The viewpoint of "Awake!" is not narrow, but is international. "Awake!" has its own correspondents in scores of nations. Its articles are read in many lands, in many languages, by millions of persons.

In every issue "Awake!" presents vital topics on which you should be informed. It features penetrating articles on social conditions and offers sound counsel for meeting the problems of *everyday life. Current news from* every continent passes in quick review. Attention is focused on activities in the fields of government and commerce about which you should know. Straightforward discussions of religious issues alert you to matters of vital concern. Customs and people in many lands, the marvels of creation, practical sciences and points of human interest are all embraced in its coverage. "Awake!" provides wholesome, instructive reading for every member of the family.

"Awake!" pledges itself to righteous principles, to exposing hidden foes and subtle dangers, to championing freedom for all, to comforting mourners and strengthening those disheartened by the failures of a delinquent world, reflecting sure hope for the establishment of God's righteous new order in this generation.

Get acquainted with "Awake!" Keep awake by reading "Awake!"

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Awake!
"It is already the hour for you to awake."
—Romans 13:11

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A Date to Check on Your Calendar

Dear Reader:

Of all the anniversaries that men observe, did you know that there is one that is of far greater importance than all others? It is the memorial of the death of God's only-begotten Son, Christ Jesus. While worldly men give honor to the memory of imperfect fellow creatures, true Christians memorialize the death that constituted the "one sacrifice for sins perpetually."—Heb. 10:12.

What makes this commemoration even more outstanding is the fact that it happens to be the only day of the year that Jesus commanded his followers to observe. Nowhere in the Bible can you find any indication of Jesus' authorizing the many "holy" days that have been observed in Christendom for hundreds of years. No, not even the day of his birth was to be celebrated; just the day of his death. —1 Cor. 11:26.

Why not, then, check your calendar of coming events at April 12, and share with the Christian witnesses of Jehovah in marking this anniversary as a special occasion? All who believe that Jehovah God lovingly provided his Son, and that Christ Jesus obediently yielded himself to be a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world of mankind, are welcome to assemble at the nearest Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses. (1 John 2:2) As a welcome visitor, you will not be called upon to do or say anything. You will be there strictly as an observer. And no collection will be taken.

But why April 12, after sundown? Because Jesus instituted this yearly observance on the very same night that he shared with his disciples his last Passover meal. (Luke 22:7-20) In this year, 1968, April 12, after sundown, is the date that corresponds with the ancient observance of the Jewish Passover.

According to Hebrew usage, the day was measured from sunset to sunset. On that memorable day, of the year 33 C.E., a great deal of action was crammed into one twenty-four-hour period. After sunset Jesus partook of the Passover in accord with the requirements of the Mosaic law. Then he went out to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. That night he was seized and led off for questioning. In the morning he

testified before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, suffered indignities at the hands of the Roman soldiers and was yielded up to his bloodthirsty enemies. They nailed him to a stake, and he finally expired at three o'clock in the afternoon, his death marked by a violent earthquake and unusual darkness. Three hours of that awesome day still remained.

Only one date each year is appropriate as an anniversary of the happenings of that day. Its commemoration is not to be confused with the so-called "holy communion" and "mass" of Christendom, in the celebration of which there is so much lack of agreement. Some churches celebrate the Lord's Supper every day, some every few weeks, others several times a year. In some cases only the bread is eaten by ordinary church members, while the clergy drink the wine. In others, all who profess membership partake of both the bread and the wine.

Among Jehovah's witnesses, however, there is recognition of the fact that there are two flocks of God's sheeplike people on earth today. One is the "little flock" of Jesus' followers who have hope of inheriting with him the heavenly kingdom. (Luke 12:32) The other flock Jesus referred to as "other sheep," an unnumbered flock of worshipers who look forward to everlasting life on this earth in God's righteous new order. (John 10:16; 2 Pet. 3:13) Only those of the "little flock" properly partake of the bread and wine passed around at the yearly celebration of the Lord's Supper. All others are present as onlookers, their very presence testifying to their appreciation of God's provision of his own Son as a sacrifice for sin.

On April 12, then, after sunset, Jehovah's witnesses, accompanied by others who love God and righteousness, will assemble for this special occasion in Kingdom Halls and other meeting places around the world. Wherever you are, it is quite likely that there is a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses near you. Ascertain the location and make your plans to attend. You are cordially invited.

Those of the "little flock" of Jesus' followers are under command to be present, for the apostle Paul records these words of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me." (1 Cor. 11:24) Those of the larger flock of "other sheep" attend the celebration, not to partake of the emblems of bread and wine, but to take note of what those of the "little flock" do. They know that the Lord's Evening Meal focuses attention on a marvelous liberation from sin and death, a liberation that will come to them eventually through the thousand-year reign of Christ.—Rev. 20:4-6.

May we see you, then, on the evening of April 12? There will be an appropriate Bible talk on the theme of the Lord's Evening Meal by a qualified speaker. Prayer will be offered in connection with the emblems of bread and wine that will be passed around. Finally, there will be a closing song of praise to Jehovah, the Provider of life through Christ Jesus.—Mark 14:22-26.

If you do not have the address of the meeting place of Jehovah's witnesses in your area, consult a telephone directory or write the publishers of this magazine for information. Be assured of a warm welcome at this memorial occasion.

Yours, keeping the festival with sincerity and truth,

Jehovah's Witnesses

WHY PEOPLE ARE Attracted to JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

What is it that causes their numbers to grow despite their often being spoken against?

IT IS baffling to many. Why should people by the tens of thousands each year be attracted to Jehovah's witnesses? Why do hundreds of thousands of persons often attend their assemblies, with more than a quarter of a million once attending a convention in New York city? Why are *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* among the most widely circulated of all journals, with over 250 million individual copies being printed this past year and *The Watchtower* enjoying a distribution in over seventy languages? How is it that an organization that is often spoken against attracts so many loyal supporters?

Interestingly, early Christianity also met a great deal of opposition and yet attracted many faithful adherents. When the Christian apostle Paul was being held in custody by the authorities in Rome in about 60 C.E., certain ones observed regarding his religion: "For truly as regards this sect it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against." (Acts 28:22) Nevertheless, the early Christian organization grew and expanded marvelously despite its being spoken against, even as the Christian organization of Jehovah's witnesses does today. Why? What is the reason?

Attraction of Early Christianity

An important reason why people were attracted to the early Christian organization was that genuine love existed among its members. It was apparent that here were warm, brotherly communities. Christians truly cared for one another. This especially was a factor that drew many individuals into association with the Christians.—John 13:35.

Another attraction of early Christianity was its emphasis on God's Word the Bible. Jesus Christ continually directed persons to the Scriptures, prefacing his frequent quotations from them with the words, "It is written." (Luke 24:44-46) His disciples, too, followed this example of giving priority to the Bible, basing all their beliefs and actions upon it. This appeal to Scriptural authority attracted many truth seekers.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17; John 17:17.

A closely related reason why people were attracted to the early Christian organization was its clear, lively preaching. Not only did such preaching exist within the congregation, moving visitors at congregational meetings to say, "God is really among you," but it was carried on outside the congregation as well. (1 Cor. 14:24, 25) The Bible record explains: "Every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus." This energetic preaching by early Christians drew many to the faith.—Acts 5:42; 6:7.

Similar Attraction Today

Are there similar reasons why people today are attracted to Jehovah's witness-

es? A parish bulletin of the St. Roch Catholic Church in Paris, France, noted that there is. The bulletin gave the very reasons named above in answer to its question: "Why do people become Jehovah's Witnesses?" The bulletin said: "These factors contribute—the discovery of warm and brotherly communities; the discovery of the Bible; the discovery of lively preaching easily understood by all. If they had found these things here, they would not have looked elsewhere."

The American Catholic magazine *Ave Maria,* in its February 24, 1962, issue, also touched on these same reasons in discussing the attraction of Jehovah's witnesses. The Catholic writer observed: "They show an interest in serving their God, become articulate and confident in their presentations, display an amazing knowledge of the Bible, and are willing to spend any amount of time studying with an interested householder. . . .

"In my visits to Kingdom Halls I have been impressed by the genuine spirit of friendliness among the Witnesses. They all know each other and their families. They recognize a stranger and make him feel welcome. They know which Witnesses have been missing weekly meetings and gently encourage them to keep up their attendance. These close social bonds would be a strong reason for a Witness to continue in the cult and to undertake the assigned missionary work."

Similar observations were also made in the religious publication *Journal of Bible and Religion,* in its issue of April 1958. The writer G. Norman Eddy, after an intensive study of Jehovah's witnesses, noted:

"You will see them a group radiating optimism and enthusiasm, a body which reveals a passionate inner conviction and an organization which reflects an almost fanatical zeal. . . . You soon come to realize that there is a real enjoyment in being a member of the group. There is the joy of associating with those of a similar faith in meeting and conference. Even the outsider senses the pleasure the Witness experiences in learning of the world-wide expansion of his faith. . . .

"You would have to search diligently to find a group with better behaved children or more idealistic young people. Penetrating more deeply into their social values, I am struck with their genuine high regard for the people of all races. Unlike some who pay lip service to the doctrine of racial brotherhood, the Witnesses welcome all to their society—even to places of outstanding leadership—without reference to color or feature."

Attracted by Love and Consideration

The genuine love and consideration that the Bible said would be a distinguishing mark of true Christians has indeed been a factor in attracting many persons to Jehovah's witnesses. Not uncommon is the comment of a man who attended a meeting of Jehovah's witnesses for the first time last year. He said: "I have seen more fellowship here at your Kingdom Hall in one afternoon than I have seen in a whole year at the Presbyterian church." He went home and informed his family that he was going to become one of Jehovah's witnesses.

Even persons who have been extremely opposed have had their attitude changed by the genuine spirit of friendliness displayed by the Witnesses. For example, a woman in Uruguay was furious when her husband became interested in studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. One day he left for a meeting while she was asleep. When she awoke, she determined to go to the Kingdom Hall and create a big scene to embarrass her husband and keep him from ever going there again.

However, when she got to the hall, a friendly attendant helped her to find a seat near her husband. On seeing so many happy people with a friendly spirit, she was unable to go through with her plans. After the meeting, the Witnesses all crowded around to welcome her and to express how happy they were that she had come. She was deeply impressed with the sincere expressions of love, something she had never seen before. She began regularly to attend the meetings with her husband and they both were baptized as Jehovah's witnesses.

Are you desirous of discovering "warm and brotherly communities" where a "genuine spirit of friendliness" exists? Do you want to associate with those who have a "genuine high regard for the people of all races"? If so, why not visit the local Kingdom Hall? See for yourself that true Christian love and consideration do exist among Jehovah's witnesses.

"Discovery of the Bible"

As noted earlier, Catholic sources admit that Jehovah's witnesses "display an amazing knowledge of the Bible," and that "discovery of the Bible" is a factor that causes many persons to be attracted to them. The Bible is a meaningful, open book to Jehovah's witnesses, and this appeals to truth seekers.

It appealed to an attendant in a Catholic hospital in France who started to study the Bible with one of Jehovah's witnesses. But it also disturbed him that what he was learning from the Bible was not in harmony with the teachings of the Catholic church. He spoke to the theologian of the hospital in an effort to clear up the discrepancies. But the theologian pointed to three Bibles, and said: "Can you make anything out of that? I have my degree in philosophy and in theology and I understand nothing of that jumble."

The Bible, admittedly, was a closed book to the theologian. He had little respect for it, nor did he look to it as a reliable authority, as do Jehovah's witnesses. On the other hand, as the young hospital attendant continued his Bible study he grew in understanding of it. The Bible opened up to him and came to have real meaning, and this is what motivated him to become one of Jehovah's witnesses.

Do you want to understand your Bible better? Do you desire to have your faith in it strengthened? If so, why not ask for a Bible study to be held with you by Jehovah's witnesses? Attend their meetings. See if you, too, are not helped in this way to "discover" your Bible. Having an accurate knowledge of its contents leads to everlasting life.—John 17:3.

'Understandable Preaching'

A closely related reason why people are attracted to Jehovah's witnesses was given by the St. Roch church bulletin as being "the discovery of lively preaching easily understood by all." Such easily understood preaching can be heard in the congregational meetings of Jehovah's witnesses. However, home instruction, where Bible questions can be given personal attention, is particularly valuable in imparting an understanding of the Scriptures to truth seekers.

This practical home Bible study arrangement can prove embarrassing to religious leaders, who themselves fail to provide it. For example, when a Protestant minister on a Pacific island warned his parishioners not to study the Bible with the Witnesses, one member of the congregation arose right in church and asked: "How can we grow up to be mature if we don't study the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses? You don't come to our homes and teach, while the Witnesses come and prove all their teachings from

the Bible. You live just three houses away from me, yet you never came to my house to teach me and my family the Bible, while the Witnesses live over ten miles away from here and they visit me every week."

Despite the offer to be made a deacon in the church, this man eventually became one of Jehovah's witnesses. He was attracted by the zeal and concern of the Witnesses for his spiritual welfare. But what particularly appealed to him was the clear and understandable explanations of Bible teachings that he received. He soon realized that here was the organization patterned after the early Christian one. Now he is receiving training so that he, too, can share in imparting an understanding of the Scriptures to others.—Rom. 10:10.

Other Features That Attract

Because of their firm faith in the Bible, Jehovah's witnesses strongly insist upon following its high moral standards. This, too, is a factor that has attracted many honest-hearted persons to the organization. For instance, a man in Switzerland who accepted a subscription for *The Watchtower* was so impressed by the moral principles encouraged by the magazine that he wrote the Watch Tower Society in Brooklyn, New York:

"I have carefully examined the contents of this magazine and see that people can be morally built up thereby and made into better people. It is my wish to learn more of this truth so that I too may become a witness of Jehovah. . . . Please do not forget me; help me, please. I shall be very grateful to you."

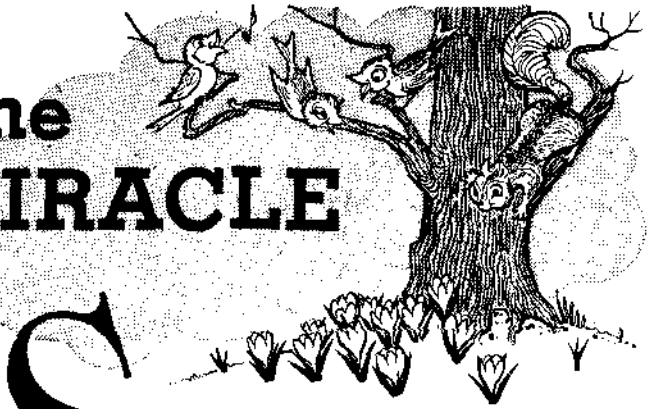
Tens of thousands of such honest-hearted persons each year are attracted to Jehovah's witnesses because they can see that they adhere to the Bible and are like the early Christians. However, just as early Christians met a great deal of opposition, so do Jehovah's witnesses. On this a prominent constitutional lawyer notes: "Their aggressive missionary tactics are reminiscent of those employed by the early Christians, and the reception accorded them by the nonbelievers is likewise reminiscent of that visited on the early Christians."—*Church, State & Freedom* by Leo Pfeffer, page 534.

Just last summer the religious magazine *The Christian Century* took note of the persecution of Jehovah's witnesses in Spain, and said: "They suffer from the general humiliations heaped on all non-Roman Catholics in that country and in addition are spurned by many Protestants . . . There is no outcry either by Roman Catholics or by Protestants against this perfidious mistreatment of human beings."—July 19, 1967.

But even this persecution in Spain and in other lands has attracted persons to Jehovah's witnesses, as, for example, in Portugal, where one man wrote a Witness presiding minister: "Those who foment such persecution against Jehovah's witnesses only cause me to inquire more of the reason. I compare your position with that of the persecution heaped upon Jesus and his apostles. If it would not be too much trouble, kindly answer this letter and send me any pamphlet you have for distribution. Also, if any of Jehovah's witnesses live near me I would appreciate being able to contact them. From what I have read, I believe this to be the true religion."

Will you, too, investigate? The parallels between Jehovah's witnesses and early Christianity are unquestionably striking. You owe it to yourself and to your family to examine and see if Jehovah's witnesses are not the true organization of God on earth today. Your life and that of your loved ones are involved.

The MIRACLE of SPRING



IF YOU have seen one, ten or a hundred springtimes, still that makes no difference. Each one is new and as fascinating as if you had never seen one before. For spring in the temperate zones of the earth is a time of marvelous change, when sun and rain combine to bring about that ever-returning gift of God—the reawakening of the earth from its deep winter sleep to vibrant life!

Springtime is many things to different people. For the child, spring is playtime. Voices of shrieking children playing in puddles of water fill the air. For the housewife, spring is when the windows are flung open and balmy breezes air the rooms; when mattresses straddle clotheslines and bed sheets flap in the fresh breezes. On the farm, spring is when baby lambs appear; when spaghetti-legged calves and little pigs find their way into children's arms. To city folk, spring is when store windows exhibit pink clothes, flowery hats and real daffodils; when boys and girls hurry to the parks to see the cherry blossoms; when the sky is bright and the air is warm again.

To the weatherman, spring in the northern hemisphere begins when the sun is directly above the equator of the earth, on its journey north. The planet begins to tip its northern hemisphere toward the sun. At this moment, on the equator, the sun rises due east and the hours of the night are exactly equal to those of the day. This is the vernal equinox, which, in Latin, means the equal nights of spring.

What delight us in spring are, not only the evidences of newborn life, but the new scents, sounds and sensations that we experience. There is wonderment in the softness of the air, in the lengthening of the days, in the sounds of birds and the fragrances of blossomtime.

Season of Awakening

Spring is not one glorious explosion of life that comes on one particular day, but, rather, a season filled with many starts and stops. Sometimes it is an erratic affair, as snow flurries and cold, windy skies follow warm days filled with hints of change. A faint sprinkling of green on a field may appear, even though snow still lies across the ground in thin patches, like pieces of paper blown about. The edges of ponds that one day are melting may be frozen tightly again the next. And some mornings there are tiny caps of snow on the gray pussy-willow catkins, and unfolding waxen pink buds of magnolia trees may have white snowy bonnets on them.

The sleep of winter is interrupted when the warmth from the sun and water from melted snow and rains permeate the frozen ground. In God's marvelous way the

storehouses of life are unlocked. Trillions of earth's tiny creatures begin to stir. The earthworms, grubs, ants, mice and moles begin to tunnel, chew, push and turn, thus aerating and loosening up the topsoil for the plunging roots of plants.

Sleeping seeds awaken and start again the intricate process of sprouting and growing. A special pattern of light and darkness, warmth and dampness, goes to work, opening those tiny vaults protecting the precious life in seeds. Hungry little roots send their tips downward in search for food. Botanists estimate that root hairs on a single mature grass plant, placed end to end, could extend for more than 6,000 miles!

The Voices of Spring

In the thawing ponds the warm waters reach into the dark depths. Frogs push up from their winter mud homes; silvery fish slip silently through the rushes at the water's edge and red-winged blackbirds fly past nearby pussy willows. All the woods becomes alive with the sound of spring.

In the low places of the forests narrow rivulets create happy sounds. Choirs of frogs convene and shake the air with nightly oratories. Aquatic insects come to life and pirouette upon the silvery surface. Overhead are clamorous ducks and geese returning to the northland.

In the bird kingdom warm air brings about changes in feathers, voices and behavior. Like young boys whose voices crack and change, cardinals, thrushes and other songbirds suddenly have a change of voice from the dry, cold cry of winter to a sudden burst of rich melody. Many male birds have soft sweet chirps to attract the female species. Some will even present gifts of berries or twigs or pebbles to the object of their affection.

Down on the farm the tractor's snarl becomes soothing music to the farmer's ear. His companions are flocks of chirping blackbirds, crows and other flying creatures that blissfully trail the plow in search for worms and other delicacies. The rich aromas of a warm upturned furrow fill the plowman with renewed hope and freedom from winter's bondage to meet the challenge of what may have made him a farmer in the first place—the love of seeing things grow.

The Colors of Spring

Many early spring flowers are a delicate white, yellow or fragile pink and blue. The sturdy green skunk cabbage thrusts itself upward through streamside mud and sometimes through ice and snow. The leaves of the plant encase life-giving warmth that sometimes is 27 degrees higher than the temperature of the air and is enough to melt snow as the plant pushes toward the sun. In March, their streaked, purplish hoods unfold to reveal tiny flowers that lure insects for pollination. After the flowers come the large, foul-smelling leaves, which have given the plant its name.

But later, as spring further unfolds, the colors deepen and the land is bright with scarlet tulips, deep purple hyacinths and bright-yellow daffodils and dandelions. Higher aboveground, the bushes burst into flame, redbuds of the eastern woods, paper-thin petals of the thorny Japanese quince and yellow drops of jasmine and forsythia.

Many trees bloom in early spring before their leaves appear. At first on the tips of tree limbs buds grow fat. Soon whole forests are engulfed with fragile flowers and red and yellow leaves. The red maple is festooned with ruby blooms. From the hazel and oaks, poplars and willows hang tassels, those slender streamers of tiny male flowers filled with pollen. On breezy

days, clouds of this golden "dust" drift through the air to fertilize the more compact female flowers. Elm tree seeds are equipped with tiny wings and cover the ground with what looks like oatmeal flakes. The winged maple seeds gyrate to earth like miniature helicopters. Some seeds germinate immediately; others wait until another year.

The breath of spring awakens our senses and brings back old memories. A multitude of elusive fragrances flood the air. Spring mixes the fir fragrances of mountain timber with the emerging scent of tender grass. It gathers in its soft breath the bouquet of the earliest blossoms hidden deep in the forests and blends it with the tang of last year's sodden leaves. In spring are the clean smells of fresh fields and mown grass and the exciting scents of blooming orchards.

Mating Time

For the many shy animals that inhabit the woods, spring is a time of domestic enterprise. Awakening in their underground dormitories, the hibernators come forth lean, irritable, as if to complain about their empty bellies. The furry animals discard their winter coats for light summer wear. Then the forest rings with excitement, for this is mating time. Small squirrels race after each other through a maze of tree branches, jerking their bushy tails, chattering and beating their paws on the ground. Cats let out hair-raising cries. A male hedgehog circles around his chosen female for hours, puffing and extending his snout toward her before the two of them shuffle off together. Skunks have a courtship dance at dusk, bowing and bobbing, hopping toward each other on stiff legs until their noses touch. The male elks crash antlers together in resounding fights to win the females. Even elephants court for weeks, beating each other gently with sensitive trunks, sometimes twining them together as if "holding hands."

In the realm of birds the male parades fine feathers and swaggers about trying to make a favorable impression. Pheasants strut in colorful spring feathers and puff out their necks when the hen is nearby. Cranes prance an awkward but effective minuet of courtship. Pigeons pursue females over busy city sidewalks, puffing their breasts and spreading their tails. Male and female albatrosses point their bills to the sky and bray like donkeys. Water birds touch beaks, wag their heads from side to side, dive and present billsful of waterweeds to each other. The male marsh hawk soars high in the sky and then dives to earth turning somersaults. A male hummingbird flies in aerial acrobatics higher and higher, then dives to earth, braking to a sudden halt a few inches from the female, who pretends that she has not noticed him at all.

By June the woods is alive with tiny new creatures. Fawns struggle along on rubbery legs. Baby skunks curiously investigate fallen logs. Mother raccoons bring their babies out of their hollow tree homes to play in the sunshine and to go on hunting trips with her. In nests are hungry cries and wide-opened mouths.

And, too, there are boys and girls slowly meandering home from school in the warm air. There are eloquent young men, like the young shepherd of Bible fame who said: "Rise up, you girl companion of mine, my beautiful one, and come away. For, look! . . . Blossoms themselves have appeared in the land, the very time of vine trimming has arrived, and the voice of the turtledove itself has been heard." (Song of Sol. 2:10-14) The whole earth at this time testifies to the truthfulness of the Genesis account that what God made was "very good."—Gen. 1:31.

"According to their Kinds"

■ Scientists better understand today what it is about heredity that permits living things to reproduce only "according to their kinds." (Gen. 1:24) *The World Book Encyclopedia* of 1966, Vol. 9, pp. 192-194, states: "Genes are the basic units of inheritance. . . . The basic chemical of a gene is DNA. The letters DNA stand for deoxyribonucleic acid, one of the nucleic acids in the nucleus of every cell.

"The molecule of DNA is a thin thread with a diameter of only about one ten-millionth of an inch. The thread is actually double, and it resembles a tiny twisted rope ladder. The twisted side pieces of the ladder are made of phosphate and a kind of sugar called deoxyribose. The steps are made of compounds called bases. There are four kinds of bases in DNA—adenine, thymine, cytosine, and guanine. . . .

"The DNA ladder divides into halves every time the chromosome divides. Each step of the ladder splits into its two bases. As a result, there are two side pieces, each with many half-steps. Inside the cell are a number of spare parts. Each of these spare parts consists of a half-step and a section of a side piece—that is, a base attached to phosphate and deoxyribose. The spare parts come from the food we eat, or they are manufactured in the body. They become attached to the two half-ladders. . . . In this way, the ladder builds a new opposite half, just like the one that split off from it. There are now two DNA ladders just like the one before it split. Thus, DNA duplicates itself every time the chromosome divides. . . .

"DNA can be thought of as the set of 'instructions' that a parent passes on to a child. The instructions are in the form of a code determined by the order of the bases along the DNA molecule."

Thus, during the cell division that makes growth and replacement of body tissues possible, each gene of the original cell nucleus duplicates. The possibilities for many variations are there, but they are always within the basic "kinds" that God created in the beginning. This process of duplication makes evolution impossible, for DNA does not allow for change outside its "kind." As *Science Year* of 1965, page 146, said: "Where one DNA molecule existed before, two DNA molecules exist afterward. Each of the two, moreover, is exactly like the original."

IS GOD DEAD?

In a school in Idaho all the students of a literature class were asked to write a poem. A fifteen-year-old witness of Jehovah decided to form his poem around the subject "Is God Dead?" The poem was graded "100" by the teacher, who suggested that he submit it to the school paper, which, in turn, printed it as follows:

God is dead some have said, and
this is their surmise,
But when I hear this senseless jeer
I wonder if they have eyes.

Have they not seen on a night serene
The stars as they go by?
And seen them shine as they keep time
In their paths across the sky?

Do they think the One who created the sun
And placed the stars in the sky,
And made them bright with blinding light,
Do they think He could die?

Look around and see the life abound,
And his creations on land and sea,
And can you still say this mere clay
Could, by any means, outlast He?

Oh, no, my friend, it would be the end
For us who are but mortals,
If He who causes us to be
Should pass through death's portals.

THE SEAS
A New Frontier

ON THIS age when rockets are probing outer space and photographing the moon, people are inclined to overlook the seas as a new frontier. Man actually has more information now about the moon, which is about 239,000 miles away, than he does about the ocean depths only one mile below the surface. Yet the approximately 140 million square miles of seas that cover 71 percent of the earth's surface contain rich resources in minerals and food that could greatly benefit mankind if properly developed.

Besides those minerals that are in solution, there are great mineral deposits such as the nodules or rounded masses of manganese, cobalt, nickel, zirconium and copper lying loose on the ocean bottom. Eighty to ninety percent of the ocean floor off the west coast of Central America is covered with them. In fact, the floor of the Pacific Ocean alone is estimated to have 10,000,000,000,000 tons of these nodules. All man needs to do is to devise a method for gathering them economically.

When it is remembered that the seas cover nearly three-quarters of the earth's surface, it is reasonable to assume that they have many great ore deposits in their submerged plains and mountains. These could be mined under pressure-resistant domes and serviced by submersible vehicles. But such operations are not economically feasible when the same ores can be obtained more cheaply elsewhere.

Some mining of undersea mineral deposits already is going on in a small way in various parts of the world. Off the Malay Peninsula there are dredges that are bringing up tin from undersea deposits, and off the coast of Alaska gold nuggets are being found by deep-digging dredges. Elsewhere iron, coal and sulfur are being mined under coastal waters. A 3,800-ton device, floating in the Atlantic Ocean off the west coast of South Africa, is sucking up high-grade diamonds from the ocean bottom through 16-inch pipes that can reach down as much as 400 feet. By means of shafts sunk through artificially built islands, the Japanese are mining veins of ore under their coastal waters.

In search of oil and gas, companies have been venturing out into the offshore waters and drilling wells that, in the United States alone, produce yearly about $700 million worth of gas and oil. But these companies are only nibbling at the vast undersea deposits that are waiting to be tapped.

Conquering the Continental Shelves

Man's first significant step toward exploiting the riches of the seas is to develop the means to work on the continental shelves. These shelves are that part of the continents that is covered with water and that extends out into the oceans on an average world wide of about forty miles. Of course, in some places there is practically no shelf, and in others it extends out hundreds of miles. By international agreement in 1964, the resources on these shelves, out to a depth of about 600 feet, were recognized as belonging to the nation occupying the adjacent land area.

In order to mine minerals, maintain oil wells and even farm for food on the continental shelves, it would be necessary for men to be able to work there for long periods. This is not possible when divers must work from ships on the surface. Some divers have concluded that the best way to operate sea-floor industries is for the workers to stay on the sea floor for weeks at a time. With underwater houses that are pressurized to equal outside water pressure, the workers would have a dry place to eat, rest and warm up without having to undergo decompression.

Decompression becomes necessary when a diver ascends to the surface. The deeper a diver goes the greater becomes the weight of water over him and therefore the greater becomes the pressure upon his body. To equalize this pressure inside his body so as not to be damaged by it, he must breathe compressed gases under the same or a little greater pressure. Some of the gases are absorbed into his tissues. They come out of his tissues and blood when the pressure is released, but this must be done slowly or they will form bubbles, causing the painful "bends." Death can easily follow when the flow of oxygen to the brain is obstructed by the bubbles. To avoid the "bends" a diver will stop periodically as he ascends to allow for decompression.

Tables have been worked out showing what length the decompression time should be for certain depths and for the length of time there. If a diver, for example, is at 100 feet for one hour, he must stop three times on the way up for decompression, spending a little more than thirty-eight minutes at it. When decompression time runs into several hours the diver can be brought up in a pressurized cylinder that can be attached to a decompression chamber on board ship, where he can undergo the process comfortably and safely.

Time-consuming decompression is a major reason why it is impractical for divers to operate an underwater industry from the surface. But when they can descend to a spot on the continental shelf and live there in a pressurized shelter for several weeks without undergoing decompression it becomes practical.

Underwater Colony

Having in mind the benefit of living for long periods under water, the noted diving expert Jacques-Yves Cousteau lowered a cylindrical cabin into the Mediterranean to a depth of thirty-five feet in 1962 in an attempt to make this possible. The cylinder provided a retreat for two divers where they could eat and rest in dry surroundings while staying underwater for a week. Using aqualungs, tanks of compressed gases on their backs attached to a breathing device, the divers were able to work for five hours at a time in open water at a depth of eighty-five feet. In the same year Edwin Link sent a diver down to 200 feet in a cylinder for a stay of 24 hours. This diver also was able to swim freely in and out of his cabin with an aqualung.

One year later Cousteau succeeded in setting up a colony on a submerged coral reef in the Red Sea. It consisted of a house that was shaped like a four-armed starfish. There were, besides sleeping quarters, a kitchen, dining space, biological laboratory and photo laboratory. During the experiment it rested on the floor of the Red Sea in forty feet of water. There was also a steel cylinder that served as a two-man cabin that was put down in ninety feet of water. Both of these underwater shelters had open entrances through which the men could come and go. The inside air pressure prevented water from coming into the dwellings. A third house served as an underwater hangar for a diving saucer, a small submersible capable of carrying two men well below a depth of 1,000 feet. It entered and left the hangar's bubble of air through an opening in the bottom.

Five men stayed in the house placed at forty feet, remaining under pressure for one month. Their days were spent in performing various tasks in the water outside. The two that used the deeper shelter remained there for one week. Instead of breathing compressed air these two used a mixture of helium and oxygen. This was necessary because they swam down to 360 feet.

The deepest an aqualung diver dares to descend on compressed air is 300 feet because of the danger from nitrogen narcosis. Below 100 feet nitrogen can begin to have a narcotic effect on the mind of a diver, causing his attention to wander and also causing him to forget to take normal precautions. He may even have hallucinations. The helium mixture does not have this dangerous effect, although it does cause a rapid loss of body heat. These successful experiments by Cousteau in the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea paved the way for lengthy stays in much deeper water.

In the summer of 1964, four Americans spent nine days at a depth of 192 feet in the waters off Bermuda. Their abode was called Sealab I. In the following year Sealab II was established on the continental shelf off the coast of California at a depth of 205 feet. It consisted of a steel cylinder that had a well-equipped laboratory, a compact galley and a dining room with bunks. An open hatch gave the men easy access to the water outside. Three teams of divers of ten men each stayed down for fifteen days at a time, and one stayed over twenty-nine days.

About the same time, Cousteau was busy with six divers in the Mediterranean Sea. He put them to work at a depth of 370 feet for three weeks. Proving that oil-well maintenance can be done at this depth, these divers replaced a 400-pound valve while a dummy oil well was under compressed air pressure of 2,500 pounds so as to simulate a genuine oil well.

About three months before these spectacular demonstrations of man's ability to live and work under the sea, two Americans under Edwin Link's direction descended to 432 feet off the Bahamas. Using a rubberized shelter, they spent two days on the ocean floor. While swimming at that depth, they were under a pressure that was fourteen times as great as at the surface of the water.

These experiments proved that it is possible to establish undersea stations on the continental shelves for industrial and scientific work. They demonstrated that man can stay for long periods under great water pressure, performing useful work without injury.

Underwater Farms

It has been estimated that the seas are capable of producing enough protein to

feed more than 30,000 million people, but this would require much more knowledge about the seas and the creatures in them than man has now. Greater food production is possible by having systematic farms on the continental shelves, where fish and shellfish could be raised for food as is done on land with cattle and chickens.

Great areas of the continental shelves could be fenced off by perforated air hoses laid on the sea bottom. These would send up streams of bubbles to prevent the cultivated fish from wandering away. The Japanese are already engaging in fish farming on a small scale. A farm was established in Okachi Bay in 1965, at a depth of about sixty-five feet. Salmon and trout are raised in nylon net cages with remarkable success. They are fed regularly through a net chimney that reaches to the surface. By cultivating oysters in the Netherlands the annual catch was quadrupled in about ten years.

NEXT ISSUE! SPECIAL!

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD

- Pope Paul VI Sees Church in Crisis.
- Catholic Clergymen Speak Out.
- How the Crisis Is Affecting the Church.
- Why the Anticlericalism World Wide?
- What It All Means.

Shellfish farming could be done on a much larger scale by divers stationed on the sea bottom. With underwater scooters and other vehicles they could operate a large shellfish farm. The farming of eatable seaweeds could also be conducted on a large scale in this manner.

Deep-diving Submersibles

To explore deep undersea plains, canyons and mountain ranges special submersibles are needed that can withstand the immense pressures found there. Limited numbers are now beginning to appear. Some are being made by private industry and others by governments.

Although there are many submarines, which are armed submersibles, they are not capable of descending to the great depths needed for ocean exploration or productive research. Useful submersibles need to have viewing ports, outside lights, cameras and mechanical arms, and they need the capability of diving thousands of feet. The famous submersible Trieste made history when it descended on January 23, 1960, to a depth of 35,800 feet. But its effectiveness was limited because it had very little ability to move about.

In 1964 a craft became operational that has a range of eighty miles and a capability of exploring for minerals at a depth of 15,000 feet. It is called the Aluminaut. The Alvin, which became operational in 1965, can reach a depth of 6,000 feet and has a range of fifteen to twenty miles. These and the other submersibles that have recently been launched or are under construction will help to increase man's knowledge of the oceans, but fleets of them are needed for the seas to be seriously explored.

From the efforts made thus far to establish man on the sea bottom, it is the hope of men like Cousteau that underwater stations can be established at still greater depths. If this can be done successfully at 1,200 feet, then most of the continental shelves will be accessible to man, opening up for him an area that is equivalent to the continent of Africa.

There is much that is yet to be learned about the seas and the seemingly limitless variety of sea creatures that our Creator has put in them for our enjoyment and use. The seas are indeed a new frontier that present mankind with a rewarding challenge.

Do You Eat Too Much?

EATING is one of our most basic activities. Only breathing and drinking water are more important to keeping ourselves alive. Wisely and lovingly the Creator provided us with a great variety of foods and has made partaking of them very pleasurable. (Eccl. 8:15) But herein lies a danger—that of overeating because of the pleasure derived therefrom.

Do you eat too much? "Of course not!" you may reply. But do not be too dogmatic about that. Chances are that, if you are forty years or older and live in a modern Western country, you do eat too much. According to *Medical World News,* May 5, 1967, what the late noted physician Sir William Osler once said is true of today: "Overeating is a vice which is more prevalent and only a little behind overdrinking in its disastrous effects. A majority of persons over forty years habitually eat too much."

Thus also Dr. James J. Goddard, United States Food and Drug Commissioner, stated, as reported in the New York *Daily News,* May 7, 1967, that "Americans are overweight, overfed and overmedicated." And Dr. Krause, in his book *Food, Nutrition and Diet Therapy* (1966), says: "Overnutrition is becoming a problem in the United States. It is estimated that 15 percent of children 6 to 15 years of age are overweight." Likewise a survey made by the United States Public Health Service found that "a high proportion of the population is too fat to be really healthy."

Are you overweight? One way you can tell is by looking in the mirror. Another way is by checking a chart giving ideal weights, in view of age, height, sex and bone structure. Still another way is to take a fold of your skin on your arm or abdomen between your fingers. How thick is it? It tells you how much fat you have under your skin. Then, again, it is recognized that generally anyone who weighs more in later years than he did when he was between twenty and thirty years old is overweight, most likely due to eating too much.

However, your being overweight is not the only way you can tell whether you eat too much. Quite likely one is eating too much if his tongue is continually coated. And there are a host of minor ills, including the common cold, bad breath and body odor, that may be traced to overeating or eating too much of certain foods. On the other hand, it does not necessarily follow that overweight is due solely to overeating; faulty metabolism due to a genetic defect could be the cause.

Why Be Concerned?

But you may ask, "What difference does it make?" It can and very often will make a great deal of difference. Thus C. M. McCay, Cornell University nutritionist, writes: "Health is the reward of temperance. . . . To be lean with a settled temper means long life." And says Dr. G. Bourne of Emory University, an authority on aging: "The greatest percentage of centenarians comes from a population which lives frugally." Then, again, *Medical World News,* January 12, 1968, told that right after World War II Germany had little heart disease because of the food shortage. And recent research shows that "by adhering to [strict] diets

despite inconveniences and deprivations involved, most lost weight and reduced their cholesterol levels . . . Only half as many suffered heart attacks as among nondieting men of the same age."—*Time*, June 30, 1967.

Note also what Boris Sokoloff, M.D., Ph.D., a research scientist, states in his book *Cancer, New Approaches, New Hope* (1952): "Overeating is at the bottom of many of our chronic afflictions. In spite of all that has been said and written concerning the necessity of a well-balanced diet, particularly when we are no longer young, the great majority of the middle-aged population are still abusing their systems through a faulty diet. Cancer is no exception to this rule. Diet . . . is an important preventive factor. . . . A restricted diet may have considerable value in cases where a malignant growth has been removed and apparent recovery has taken place. It is precisely for those who have been operated upon that a very restricted diet should be recommended. . . . The opinion has been expressed by many leading men in the field that cancer incidence in the human race could be reduced considerably by so simple a preventive measure as adoption of a restricted diet by all approaching the age of forty." He also makes quotations of others, such as that "overnutrition is unusually common in histories of cancerous patients."

No question about it, good health and long life are good reasons for guarding against overeating. But there are also other reasons. Just think of all the money you can save in the course of a year if you cut down your food intake even 10 percent! The Bible says: "He that is loving wine and oil will not gain riches." —Prov. 21:17.

Then, again, ever so many things in work or play come easier or are more pleasurable when one keeps trim. The overweight housewife must work harder to keep her home neat and clean. There is also the matter of control of one's emotions. It is easier to control these when we are abstemious. Besides, practicing self-control at the table helps us in exercising self-control in other areas.

Women have a reason of their own to guard against eating too much, namely, their figures, their attractiveness. One middle-aged woman took off thirty pounds in eleven weeks and for the first time dared to wear a bathing suit. A housewife so delighted her husband by taking off fifty pounds that he bought her a full-length mirror to which he attached a note: "You are the fairest of them all." —*Time*, April 7, 1967.

But most of all have dedicated Christian ministers strong reason to guard against overeating. Why so? Because their salvation may depend upon their doing so, even as Jesus warned: "Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties . . . and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare."—Luke 21:34, 35.

Why the Tendency?

Why the tendency to overeat? One reason without a doubt is inherited selfishness. (Gen. 8:21) Our fathers ate unripe grapes and our teeth have been set on edge. (Jer. 31:29) One's eating too much may be due to an inherited emotional nature, or it may be due to a genetic defect, a glandular problem such as faulty metabolism.

Often the cause for overeating, however, is simply a case of mistaken kindness. As one nutritionist once put it, 'Have

you married a good cook? Then likely you will be in mortal danger, for many good cooks labor under the misapprehension that plumpness is a sign of good health!' And closely related to this is entertaining and being entertained. Traveling representatives of the Watch Tower Society are often beset with this problem. Their hosts almost invariably want to give expression of their Christian love for them by overfeeding them! It takes tact and willpower for these to keep in the best of physical shape in spite of such mistaken kindness.

Then, again, the cause may simply be the advancing years. We are told by Dr. Anderson in *Health Principles and Practice* (1967) that "after 30 years of age, the basal metabolic needs for the same body weight decline about 7 percent every ten years. The individual who continues the same dietary practices and mode of living as he grows older can expect to gain weight." This is in part due to the fact that as people grow older they usually become less active. In fact, the problem of just how much to eat is, getting down to rock bottom, simply one of balancing one's intake of food with one's physical activity. In prosperous Western lands physical activity continues to diminish, for people want to exert themselves ever less and less. They ride elevators for just a floor or two and use the family car to drive to the corner grocery store just a block or two away. It calls to mind what the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel said about Sodom—"surfeit of food, and prosperous ease."—Ezek. 16:49, *RS*.

Nor to be overlooked is overeating due to emotional factors. Ever so many unfavorable emotional states, such as anxiety, loneliness, frustration or discontent cause some people to overeat, even as they cause others to eat less. As has well been observed, "hunger is primarily physiological," but "appetite is primarily psychological, something acquired." Thus a craving for sweets is primarily due to psychological factors rather than hunger, which can be satisfied with one food as well as with another.

What Can You Do About It?

What can be done about overeating? Plenty! There are many approaches to the problem from which you can choose. For one thing, it will help you if you keep in mind such Scriptural principles as that "not by bread alone does man live," and that "the kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking." Yes, eat to live; do not live to eat!—Deut. 8:3; Rom. 14:17.

In this regard you might take a page from some of United States' leading nutritionists, such as Mayer of Harvard and Keyes of the University of Minnesota, as reported on in a popular woman's magazine.* Some ninety of these were sent questionnaires, and a number of them were personally interviewed. It was found that, by and large, these men are extremely abstemious. They are weight watchers. "It is wise to be somewhat underweight," is the way one put it. Generally their breakfasts are very light and their luncheons are on the light side also, usually consisting of soups or salads, sandwiches and fruit. Many of them in their main meal have neither bread nor butter. All of which makes good sense since such men are largely of sedentary habit. A laborer may need a big breakfast.

In particular do they make it a point to cut down on fats. Eating slowly helps them cut down on how much they eat, and at banquets they nibble while others gorge. Moreover, these men do not think it wasteful to throw away a bit of rich food rather than to overload their bodies. Desserts, for the most part, are fruit,

* *The Ladies' Home Journal*, February 1967.

small portions of ice cream or are eliminated entirely. Said one of them regarding rich desserts: "I avoid them like the plague!"

The report further stated that these men recognize that it takes willpower; they appreciate the importance of exercise; they walk several flights of stairs instead of taking elevators or walk part of the way to work, and so forth. And what gives them the incentive to discipline themselves in these ways? The very fact that they are professional nutritionists. They must be healthy as well as look the part for their advice to be taken seriously!

From the examples of these men it is apparent that, while there are many approaches, both direct and indirect, to the problem of guarding against overeating, they all involve a measure of self-control. For example, simply making it a hard and fast rule never to take a second helping of any food will go far to keep one from overeating. And so will the rule never to eat between meals, or to limit it to fresh fruits or such vegetables as raw tomatoes and raw carrots.

Then there is the theory of never mixing high starches and high proteins, such as bread with meat, at the same meal. Regardless of the merits of this theory, the fact remains that it will help you not to overeat, for if you take any such proteins as meat, eggs, fish or cheese, you will do without such starches as bread, potatoes or spaghetti. This also eliminates most desserts.

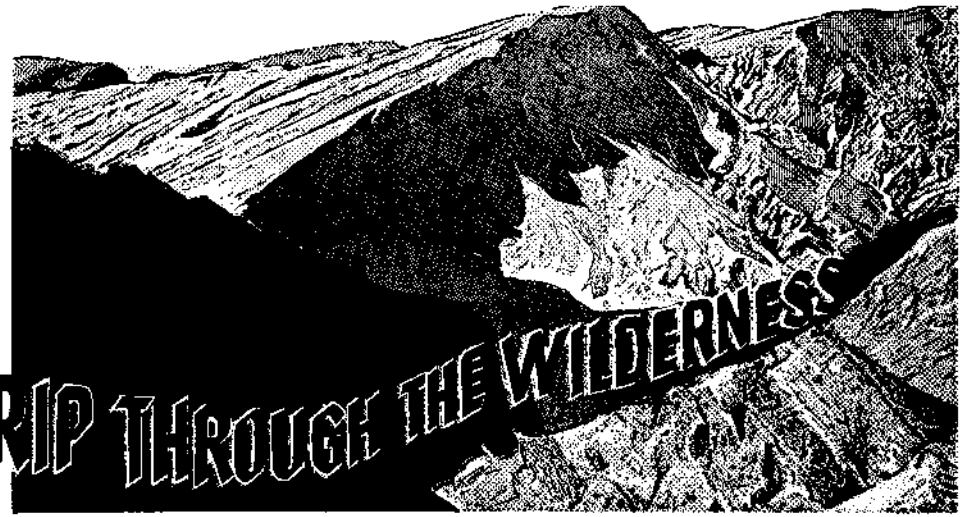
Then, again, many have solved the problem of overeating by the low carbohydrate diet. In this diet one cuts out all sugar as well as sweet wines, beer and liqueurs and limits carbohydrates to 55 grams a day.* This also results in cutting out most rich desserts, for one piece of pumpkin pie would take up the daily allotment of carbohydrates. Yes, much overnutrition can be blamed on such desserts. If you must have desserts, why not have fruit?

Another aid to avoiding overeating is to keep meals simple. Eat unrefined rather than refined foods; eat foods prepared simply, baked fish or potatoes, instead of fried. Have meals simple as to number of items. Also, use seasonings sparingly, as they tempt one to overeat.

Of course, if you are prone to overeat because of emotional problems, the thing to do is to seek help in solving them. The Bible gives much practical advice, and ministers who preach and practice its principles are always glad to help others to apply them in their lives. "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer, but a spirit that is stricken makes the bones dry." —Prov. 17:22.

Yes, eating more than is necessary for good health is a very common failing, but it is a luxury that simply is not worth the price it exacts in poorer health, shortened years or in the deprivation of other pleasures. It pays to exercise self-control at the table!

* A slice of bread is said to have 11 grams of carbohydrates.



A TRIP THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

BY "AWAKE!" CORRESPONDENT IN ISRAEL

EARLY in June, 1967, the eyes of the world were anxiously focused on the Middle East. Of particular concern was that touchy border area where the Egyptian-occupied Sinai desert blended with the rugged terrain of Israel's southland, the Negeb. In fact, it was from the Negeb that Israeli armor poured across the border in the morning hours of June 5.

Perhaps you have wondered about the Negeb. What kind of country is it? Are there roads? Do people live there? And it may be that your interest is heightened because of its ancient history. Possibly you have learned that the Negeb, meaning "the South," was no vague directional expression back in Abraham's time, but, rather, referred specifically to the south part of the land God promised to give Abraham's descendants.—Gen. 12:9, *Authorized* and *Revised Standard Versions*.

The Negeb is mostly wilderness, to be sure, but what does that convey to you? Vast, empty stretches of desert sand, unfit for agriculture? This is not exactly the case. Some portions are desertlike, but others are cut by deep gorges the steep walls of which present a remarkable array of color. It is just as though a tableland some 1,000 to 2,000 feet above sea level had been shattered into a multitude of small pieces.

But come along for a day's trip by modern transport through one section of this southland—the 150-mile stretch from Beersheba to Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba. You will enjoy the ever-changing panorama.

Real Desert

We are off south on the main road from Beersheba, capital of the Negeb. And we are actually in a desert here—sand dunes and rolling dry hills. The camels of the Bedouin traders either pad along under bulky loads or idly congregate at some water hole. Out there on the dry hillside those strange-looking black squares are the goat's-hair tents of Bedouin encampments. If we had time to stop we would probably find very much the same customs in vogue as those back in Abraham's day.

At that time Abraham's household would be practically isolated in this arid, uninhabited region, you might be inclined

to conclude. But not so. Archaeologists have unearthed evidence purporting to show that in that remote age the district was settled by farming population, people who could offer some measure of hospitality to travelers. It also appears that the inhabitants had developed an ingenious system of irrigation, designed to take advantage of the heavy run-off of rainwaters during the short rainy season. There were terraced grainfields in the wadis and underground cisterns here and there.

It is claimed that after a period of settled habitation, from and after 2000 B.C.E., the region again became a wilderness infested with marauding nomads. The sudden change is even linked to the Bible record of that armed raid by Chedorlaomer and his confederates described in Genesis, chapter 14. Writes Nelson Glueck: "I found that every village in their path had been plundered and left in ruins, and the countryside laid waste. The population had been wiped out or led away into captivity. For hundreds of years thereafter the entire area was like an abandoned cemetery."—*Rivers in the Desert,* pages 68-74.

The Wilderness of Zin

Our journey now has brought us to the ruins of the Byzantine city of Abdat, once inhabited by the Nabataeans. There on the right is an interesting sight in this desolate region—a small plantation of various crops. Imagine that, in the Wilderness of Zin! An experimental farm had been established here, a farm that subsists on natural water supplies, utilizing the trapped rains of the winter season and distributing them skillfully. No extra water supply has been brought from the outside.

That the soil is fertile is quite evident when we view the nearby settlement of Sede-Boker, where all kinds of fruits and vegetables are produced. Thus, building upon the already-existing irrigation scheme of the pre-Abrahamic settlers, which was utilized in turn by the Nabataeans and Byzantines, the present inhabitants have crops thriving today. Another feature of the region that is helpful to growth is the exceedingly heavy fall of dew common throughout the summer season. This provision enables plant life to survive the searing heat of the summer sun.

As we penetrate the Wilderness of Zin have you noted the change that has come in the scenery? Here the land is no longer sandy and undulating. Rather, we encounter mountains and valleys and have to skirt deep gorges. Some of the peaks are 3,000 feet high! Layers of hard, enduring rock sit like huge caps atop the softer sandstone strata underneath, and the weather has gouged the terrain into wild-looking crags. And look at the array of colors! At sunrise and sunset the sight can be awe-inspiring.

As we pause for a view, do you notice how utterly silent it is out here, far from the bustle of city and market? Here, too, we can appreciate firsthand the refreshing effects from "the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land."—Isa. 32:2.

Now we are crossing a number of dry valleys, some of them deep enough to be termed canyons. These are the "torrent valleys," so frequently mentioned in the Bible. (Gen. 26:17; Num. 21:12) Not a drop of water is to be seen in them right now, yet it is not difficult to imagine the onrushing waters as the heavy rains swiftly drain off these rocky surroundings. As soon as the rains are over, the scene changes and again we have dry wilderness.

The largest torrent valley that we traverse on this route is the Wadi Paran, which cuts south through the Wilderness of Paran, familiar to us from its having

been the site of Israelite encampments. (Num. 10:12; 12:16) Here, too, Ishmael made his home, far from populated areas, and David and his companions went into hiding here from the spies of King Saul. —Gen. 21:21; 1 Sam. 25:1.

As we continue through the central Negeb and note the utter desolation all around, we are reminded that only by the miraculous intervention of Jehovah God could the host of some millions of Israelites under Moses have survived the slow trek through here. Bread from heaven and water from the rocks were lovingly provided by the God who had identified himself with the descendants of Abraham. Protection, too, he provided, for the camp of Israel had to contend with the strike-and-run tactics of marauding Amalekites. —Ex. 17:8-13; Num. 14:45.

The Last Lap—the Arabah

Soon now we are finished with the ups and downs and twists and turns of the road through the Negeb, for we are descending into the Arabah, the broad valley that at this point forms the continuation of the deep Rift Valley of the Jordan running southward from the Dead Sea. Facing us across the valley are the mountains of Edom, reaching in places up to 5,500 feet above sea level, and glowing pink and red in the rays of the setting sun. Now the road has leveled off and we should reach our destination before dark.

Suddenly we come upon an industrial center, right out here in the middle of nowhere. What sort of place is this? Why, it is a copper-smelting plant! That reminds us that the discovery by archaeologists of ancient copper-mining activities in this area suggested to modern Israel the idea of again exploiting these resources of the land about which Jehovah had originally promised that its recipients would "mine copper."—Deut. 8:9.

Since there is still enough daylight left, let us turn off the main road here and go through the plant property, for there is a trail leading to the so-called Pillars of Solomon. Ah, there they are! Right out in the open we come upon these fantastic craggy rocks that rise steeply from the plain by which we have approached. Dark reddish in color, they are deeply fissured by the weather. It is almost as though there were incipient canyons cutting deep into these crags. How very like the reddish gorge at the ancient site of Petra, over to the east of here in the hills of Edom!

Journey's end approaches as we glimpse the Red Sea in the distance, at least the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. Does this scene bring anything to mind? Yes, it was here that the Israelites passed on their way northward to the land promised them. And from Solomon's reign we have heard about his fleet of ships "made in Ezion-geber, which is by Eloth [modern Eilat], upon the shore of the Red Sea in the land of Edom."—1 Ki. 9:26; Deut. 2:8.

Lost for centuries, the site was found when archaeologists followed the indications of the Bible account. And sure enough, there was the "tell" or ancient city mound close to the Red Sea shore. Excavations confirmed it as Solomon's naval port. Pottery fragments dated the buildings as from the era of Solomon, while there were also evidences of reconstructions during the reigns of Jehoshaphat and Uzziah. (2 Chron. 20:36; 26:2) No wonder Nelson Glueck saw fit to comment on "the complete reliability of the Biblical statement"!—*Rivers in the Desert,* page 159.

Shall we find a motel now? We have

covered in a few hours a distance that must have taken ancient travelers many weeks to traverse. We have been able to observe the climate and topography with which they had to contend. We have seen, too, in this wilderness, beauty and majesty. From the human viewpoint, so much remains to be done here in the Negeb that it staggers the mind. Is it not reassuring to know that when God's kingdom directs the transformation of the whole earth into a paradise of peace, waters will flow here and the wilderness itself will blossom like a garden?

FROM WHOM DID WE GET THE ALPHABET?

"ALPHABET" is the English name of the system of letters employed to set down in writing the sounds used in speech. It is derived from the first two Greek letters, *alpha* and *beta,* which, in turn, come from the Hebrew *aleph* and *beth.*

There are many theories as to the origin of the alphabet. The Sumerian and Babylonian cuneiform, the Hittite hieroglyphs, and the Egyptian forms of writing have all been suggested as possible sources. However, as a prominent authority, Dr. David Diringer, states in his book *The Story of the Aleph Beth:* "It is now generally agreed that all existing alphabets, and those no longer used, derived from one original alphabet." On page 39 he quotes G. R. Driver as saying: "It was one, and only one, of the gifts of the Semites to mankind," and then states: "It was this alphabet which became the ancestor of all alphabetic scripts the world has known."

With regard to archaeological discoveries, among the earliest preserved examples of the alphabet, according to the methods of dating used by archaeologists, are inscriptions discovered at Serabit el-Khadem on the Sinai Peninsula, believed to be from the nineteenth or eighteenth century B.C.E. The Ugaritic clay tablets are assigned to the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C.E. And inscriptions at Byblos in Phoenicia are considered as dating from about 1100 B.C.E.

The Phoenician letters are nearly identical with those of the early Hebrew alphabet, whereas those from Sinai have considerable variation. The earliest preserved Hebrew inscriptions include a fragmentary inscription from Lachish ascribed to the twelfth or eleventh century B.C.E. The so-called "Gezer Calendar" is thought to be of the eleventh or tenth century B.C.E. The Moabite Stone or stele of King Mesha of Moab (2 Ki. 3:4) is said to be of about the ninth century B.C.E. The beautifully written Samarian ostraca, recorded in cursive style or running hand, is ascribed to the reign of Jeroboam II (852-811 B.C.E.). And finally, the Siloam tunnel inscription is evidently from the reign of King Hezekiah (745-716 B.C.E.). It is not until about the

third century B.C.E. that a wealth of material of early Jewish scripts becomes available.

On the basis of these discoveries the tendency is to view the Phoenician and Sinaitic alphabets as antedating the Hebrew. This, of course, does not of necessity logically follow, and in the above-mentioned publication Dr. Diringer asks the question: "Is it possible that the ancient Hebrews who presented the World with the Bible and Monotheism, also gave it the Alphabet? The possibility certainly exists . . ." The relative scarcity of ancient Hebrew inscriptions does not argue against this, inasmuch as the Hebrews were not given to the erection of monuments or the making of plaques memorializing the feats of kings and heroes, as did other ancient peoples. The climate and soil of Palestine likewise are not such as contribute to the preservation of papyrus writings as is the case with the land of Egypt.

Not Originally Pictographic

The common theory is that the Hebrew alphabet derived from pictographic writing. This theory seeks support in the fact that the names for the Hebrew letters are often the same as or similar to the Hebrew names of certain objects, *aleph* meaning "bull," *beth* meaning "house," *gimel* being similar to the Hebrew *gamal* or "camel," and so forth. However, difficulties arise in following this through with all the letters, and the supposed similarity between the form of the letters and the suggested meaning of the name is often such as requires considerable imagination. Thus, while some believe that the letter *gimel* originally represented a camel (or a camel's neck) others suggest that it originally pictured a "throw stick"; some, that *daleth* represented a door, others, perhaps originally a fish; *zayin,* a weapon or perhaps an olive tree; *teth,* a serpent or perhaps a basket, and so forth.

It is therefore interesting to note Dr. Diringer's statement where, after showing that the phonetic value of each Hebrew letter corresponds to the initial sound of the name applied to it, he points out: "It would be wrong to assume that [this] necessarily indicates the use of pictorial representations of the objects whose names the letters bore: in other words, there is no clear evidence that the symbols were originally pictographic." Thus, in teaching someone the English alphabet the teacher might say that *A* stands for "apple," *B* stands for "boat," *C* stands for "cat," and by that merely mean that the *sound value* of the letter is represented by the initial letter of the following word, *not* that the letter's form resembles in any sense the shape or characteristics of the object identified by that word.

There is no sound basis for the theory that the alphabet is the result of a gradual evolution through pictographic, ideographic, or syllabic writings. Although the ancient Egyptians eventually used a number of their phonetic signs to stand for specific consonants, they never did isolate them as a distinct alphabet. And they continued to use their ideograms and syllabic phonograms until the time of the Common Era. Thereafter they adopted the Greek alphabet.

Source of Original Alphabet

The only historical answer as to the source of the original script is the one found in the Bible at Genesis 5:1, which says: "This is the book of Adam's history." For such "history" to have been preserved through the Flood it would have had to be known and understood by Noah and his sons. The subsequent confusion of languages at Babel after 2239 B.C.E. should not have included or originally af-

fected the Shemites, descendants of Shem, who was blessed by Jehovah God. (Gen. 9:26; 11:1-9) Shem (as well as Noah) was yet living at that time. (Gen. 9:28, 29; 11:10, 11) Hence the original writing script of Adam could be preserved in the line of Shem, including his later descendants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the father of the nation of Israel.

This is the Bible's answer, and, in reality, the only historical one, to the question as to whether what became known as the Hebrew alphabet was the original one and as to its initial source.

Source of the Modern Alphabet

Following the exile of the Jews in Babylon the Aramaic style of letters was adopted by them, and from this developed the square style of letters characteristic of the modern Hebrew alphabet. Nevertheless, there is evidence indicating that the early Hebrew script continued to be used in post-exilic times. There is no history of a pictographic writing independently developing into an alphabet. In addition to the case of the Egyptian writing, other peoples, such as the Mayas, evidently employed pictographic writing for millenniums with no evolution into an alphabet. The Chinese continue to employ this pictographic writing till this day.

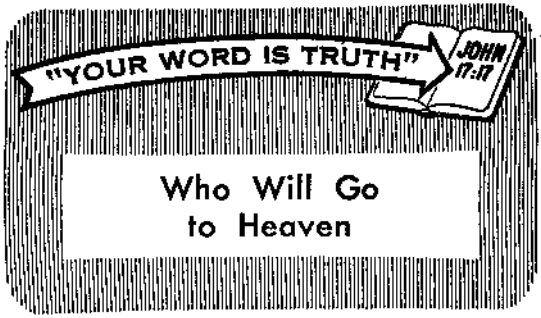
Referring to the one original alphabet, Dr. Diringer shows that other peoples or civilizations later developed their own variations of that basic alphabetic script. These variations, with the passing of time, eventually came to be almost unrecognizable in their relation to other members of the same family (as well as to the original script). He adds: "Thus, the Brahmi script, the great mother-script of India, the Korean alphabet, the Mongolian scripts are derived from the same source as the Greek, the Latin, the Runic, the Hebrew, the Arabic, and the Russian alphabets, although it is practically impossible for a layman to see a real resemblance between them."—*The Story of the Aleph Beth,* page 39.

The Greek alphabet is derived from the Semitic alphabet and was apparently introduced into Greece by the Phoenicians perhaps as late as the tenth century B.C.E. The Greeks made a valuable addition to it in that they took the surplus letters for which they had no corresponding consonants (*aleph, he, heth, ayin, waw,* and *yod*) and employed these as letters representing the vowel sounds *a, ĕ, ē, o, y,* and *i.* Of the two styles of Greek writing, the eastern and the western, the latter became the source of the Latin alphabet and, in turn, of the English alphabet.

The alphabet, like so many things about man, underscores the truthfulness of the inspired statement: "[God] made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." —Acts 17:26.

Power Dives for Dinner

● The ocean bird called the gannet is a powerful flier that catches its fish meals by plunging into the sea for them, sometimes from a height of 100 feet and at an estimated speed of 100 miles an hour. The Creator has marvelously designed it. A specially sturdy head enables the bird to meet the impact of entry into water; there are also special air sacs or "cushions" in the bird's breast that reduce the shock of impact. However, with such power dives there are mishaps now and then. One plunging gannet hit a board six feet below the water. The dead bird was found with its beak firmly driven into the wood. To fetch its dinner the diving gannet sometimes pursues fish to a depth of ninety feet below the water's surface.



NOT all faithful servants of God will get to heaven. Perhaps that is a new thought to you. It may be that you have always concluded that all who do good will eventually end up in heaven. But the Bible does not support this understanding of matters. It shows, rather, that the goal of heavenly life is for comparatively few from among mankind.

[2] To confirm this we can turn to the text at Matthew 11:11, for example. It is one of Jesus' own public statements: "Among those born of women there has not been raised up a greater than John the Baptist; but a person that is a lesser one in the kingdom of the heavens is greater than he is." So the man who was Jesus' forerunner, who had the privilege of baptizing Jesus, is shown to be of lower rank than a lesser one in the "kingdom of the heavens" class.

[3] Remember, those embraced in this statement by Jesus are such outstanding men of faith as Noah, Abraham, Job, Moses and David. And even though you may have felt sure that men like Abraham and David, at least, had gone to heaven, yet the Bible's word about them is clear-cut. Over eighteen centuries after Abraham's death Jesus could still say: "No man has ascended into heaven." (John 3:13) And the apostle Peter was equally emphatic that David had not gone to heaven.—Acts 2:34.

[4] Who, then, will go to heaven, if such champions of true worship have no expectation of attaining to heaven? Jesus revealed to the apostle John that only 144,000 humans would be changed to be spirit creatures in due time and united with the "Lamb," God's Son, on heavenly Mount Zion. That limited number are described as the ones "bought from among mankind as a first fruits to God and to the Lamb." They are the ones who "will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years." (Rev. 14:1-4; 20:6) To this select group the apostle Paul wrote: "God selected you . . . To this very destiny he called you through the good news we declare, for the purpose of acquiring the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. 2:13, 14.

[5] Those called to be with him in heavenly glory Jesus refers to as "my brothers." And he clearly indicates that a great multitude of persons befriending and cooperating with his persecuted "brothers" would be duly rewarded. (Matt. 25:40) How? By being privileged to live on earth when God's heavenly kingdom extends to mankind the blessings outlined at Revelation 21:1-4. So, just as Adam and Eve enjoyed blessings of paradise here on earth prior to their disobedience, loving supporters of Christ and of his spiritual brothers will enjoy peace and happiness in the restored earthly paradise.

[6] Notice how the words of the psalmist, King David of Israel, give assurance about that hope for a multitude of humans: "But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." (Ps. 37:11) How wonderful it will be to live on earth when all wickedness has been removed, when there is no longer any cause for sorrow!

[7] Is this just a dream? No, for the Bible gives many other promises, including this one: "The upright are the ones that will

reside in the earth, and the blameless are the ones that will be left over in it. As regards the wicked, they will be cut off from the very earth; and as for the treacherous, they will be torn away from it." (Prov. 2:21, 22) Earth will become a glorious place of habitation for obedient ones of all nations, tribes and tongues.

[9] That grand result will be due to the fact that God's kingdom in heaven, with Christ as king and his brothers as "kings with him," will have crushed and put an end to all the wicked rulerships of earth that are under Satanic control. (Rev. 20:6; Dan. 2:44; 1 John 5:19) God will fully answer that prayer of righteously inclined men and women: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." —Matt. 6:9, 10.

[9] So now you can understand why many Christians do not have a heavenly hope. They were not called to such a destiny. They anticipate, as the reward of their faithfulness, life in a paradise here on earth. Here, too, they look forward to a grand reunion with many of their loved ones who have died.—John 5:28; 11:43, 44.

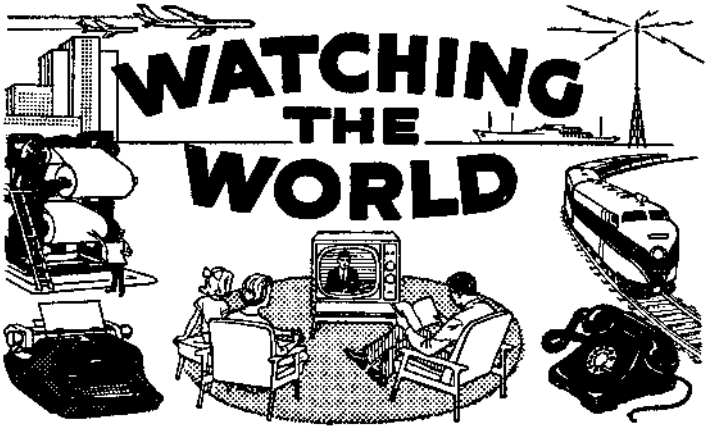
[10] On the other hand, the 144,000 from among mankind, and they alone, can say as did the apostle Peter: "He [God] has freely given us the precious and very grand promises, that through these you may become sharers in divine nature . . . For this reason, brothers, all the more do your utmost to make the calling and choosing of you sure for yourselves." (2 Pet. 1:4, 10) It is for such that Jesus makes preparation in heaven, just as he promised he would: "I am going my way to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am you also may be."—John 14:2, 3.

[11] This class with the heavenly hope are described by the apostle Peter as "the ones chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," and to them he gives the encouragement: "God . . . according to his great mercy . . . gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance. It is reserved in the heavens for you."—1 Pet. 1:1-4.

[12] Thus, not every follower of Christ will attain to heaven. Comparatively speaking, only a small number of humans will be raised from death as spirit creatures, inheriting immortality, deathlessness, and with the great reward of seeing Jehovah God "just as he is." (1 John 3:2) What a privilege for those with the earthly hope of everlasting life to serve in the Kingdom work on earth today alongside the small remaining number of those chosen to be "heirs of the kingdom" of the heavens!—Jas. 2:5.

Can you answer these questions? For answers, read the article above.

(1) What is the common idea as to the future of good persons at death? (2) According to Matthew 11:11, how does John the Baptist stand in relation to those who gain the "kingdom of the heavens"? (3) Who are some of the notables who are no greater than John the Baptist, and are they in heaven? (4) How many from among humans will go to heaven, according to Revelation 14:1-4? (5) What hope is held out to supporters of Christ and his spiritual brothers? (6) How does Psalm 37:11 show that there is an earthly hope for a great multitude of humans? (7) What added assurance of this hope is found at Proverbs 2:21, 22? (8) What must first happen to the kingdoms of the earth before such blessings can come to all the meek ones of the earth? (9) Why, then, do many Christians entertain an earthly rather than a heavenly hope, and what blessings do they anticipate? (10) What statement by the apostle Peter shows that the 144,000 from among men have a higher destiny? (11) What further words by Peter indicate the reward awaiting this limited number of Jesus' followers? (12) What fine privilege do those with the earthly hope now have?



Public Indignation

◈ Reaction to Malawi's cruel and bestial persecution of Jehovah's witnesses has been one of shock throughout the world. That such inhuman atrocities should be taking place in this twentieth century left people aghast and brought shame to Africa. Press reaction was immediate and world wide. The Manchester (N. H.) *Union Leader* carried a full report of Malawi's religious persecution. The Washington *Post*, the Chicago *Daily News*, the New York *Post*, the Houston *Chronicle*, *The Telegram* of Toronto, *The Idaho Daily Statesman*, the London *Daily Telegraph*, the Philadelphia *Inquirer* and a large number of other papers from coast to coast in America and in many other cities of the world have featured stories of Malawi's Nazi-type persecution against Jehovah's witnesses. Resolutions at Christian assemblies have been adopted by thousands in attendance condemning Malawi's inhumanity. Entire congregations have assembled to write protest letters. One congregation wrote 1,023 letters, another 900, yet another 600. Also, truckloads of clothing and food, as well as funds, have been sent to those in Malawi who have had all their property destroyed by merciless persecutors. The response shows that such brutal and inhuman attacks are repugnant to decent humanity and have become a blotch against the name of Malawi and of Africa.

Biggest Hovercraft

◈ The 165-ton Mountbatten-class hovercraft had a successful launching at the Isle of Wight in the early part of February. The first sea trials were made in heavy winds and six-foot waves. The sight of the huge craft—130 feet long and nearly 50 feet high—speeding across choppy seas at some 60 knots gave viewers a thrill. In August it is scheduled to start on regular service across the English Channel between Dover and Boulogne. The craft can carry 254 passengers and 30 cars.

Hippies in Church

◈ Many clergymen have catered to the hippies and their conga drums. At Glide Methodist Memorial Church in downtown San Francisco, hippies beat their conga drums and shouted four-letter obscenities during the Sunday worship service. They were protesting what they called the "hypocrisy of the church." They said they want all churches open 24 hours a day for meditation, music, dancing and eating. However, when the minister was asked for comment regarding what went on in his church, he merely stated: "The sermon is my thing. Today's harassment is their thing."

$1,000 to Wed

◈ Every Greek workingwoman who marries after April 1 will receive a $1,000 dowry from the Greek government. It is hoped that this will stimulate marriages and a population explosion in Greece, where the population has been decreasing steadily. One reason for the decrease is believed to be the financial status of the male. Many men simply cannot afford to get married, unless the woman has an attractive dowry. This has resulted in a high number of illegitimate births. Illegal abortionists thrive and there is a high rate of infanticide. In an effort to reverse the present trend, the Greek government is offering the attractive $1,000 dowry. Included in the offer are vacations for workingmen and workingwomen, free baby-sitters and free tickets to museums and theaters.

Earthquakes and Disease

◈ True to Bible prophecy, the earth is experiencing a rash of earthquakes and pestilence. (Luke 21:11) A powerful earthquake ripped across the Aegean Sea early February 20. A fishermen's islet of 179 people was badly hit. A rescue team reported that all of the 175 houses on the islet were destroyed. Nineteen people were killed and eighteen were injured. The quake registered 7.1 on the 10-degree Richter scale.

In Karachi, Pakistan, five hundred people died of smallpox in the space of four months. The disease reached epidemic proportions, with more than 100,000 people affected.

Teen-Age Killers

◈ A published United Press International dispatch stated

that investigators were looking into reports that teen-age gangs were hiring youths as young as 13 years old to commit murder in the Chicago area. State's Attorney John Stamos said that six gang killings were being investigated. More than one of the suspects in the slaying has said he was paid to murder. "Boys 13, 14 and 15 years old are involved," Stamos said. "One was paid $6 and a sandwich to murder a man—a 13-year-old in this case. One was paid $61. The boys were paid to commit murder." It appeared that older gang leaders had adopted the policy of assigning killings to junior members because their chances of severe punishment if caught were less. That a man's life is rated as worth no more than $6 and a sandwich in this era of lawlessness is a frightful indictment of the times in which we live.

"Not a Disease"

◈ Dr. R. E. Reinert, chief of staff of the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Topeka, Kansas, said alcoholism should be viewed as "a habit, not a disease." Dr. Reinert believes alcoholism and cigarette smoking have many similarities. For those who want to stop, the same all-or-nothing-at-all treatment must prevail for both smoker and compulsive drinker. "Cutting down is no good. Abstinence is required," Reinert stressed.

70,000 Abortions

◈ A published Associated Press report from Prague, dated February 17, stated that during the first nine months of 1967 more than 70,000 women in Czechoslovakia requested abortions.

"Unsafest Nation"

◈ "The richest nation in the world is rapidly decaying into the unsafest nation at home," said J. Shane Creamer, chairman of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission, in February. The national crime rate has doubled in the last 25 years. A recent Federal Bureau of Investigation report said that crime is going up nearly nine times as fast as population growth. Creamer stated that the nation needed a "realistic" formula to prevent crime. This, he said, would be "swift detection, immediate apprehension and prompt prosecution and definite and certain punishment." As things are now, he declared, the nation is locked "on a collision course with disaster." According to the latest Gallup Poll, crime and lawlessness are viewed by the public as the top domestic problem facing the nation for the first time since the beginning of scientific polling in the mid-thirties. Crime and lawlessness were mentioned nearly twice as often as any other local problem.

How Much Is $186 Billion?

◈ According to President Johnson, America's fiscal 1969 budget is $186,000,000,000. This budget he described as not only "tight," but "austere," the least possible amount the government can get by on. How much is an austere $186 billion? A one-foot-high stack of fresh dollar bills would be worth $2,796; a mile-high stack would be worth $14,762,880, in $1 bills; the budget, $186 billion, would make a stack almost 13,000 miles high, or nearly one-twentieth of the distance to the moon! If you were to spend $1,000 per second, it would take you nearly six years to spend the U.S. budget. Since the government spends the $186 billion in just a single year, it spends the money at the rate of nearly $6,000 per second.

Boycott of Olympics

◈ A boycott of this year's Olympic Games in Mexico City was approved on February 26 by the executive commission of the 32-nation Supreme Council for sports in Africa. They are protesting South Africa's readmission to the Olympics. The decision threatened to disrupt the Olympics, to be held in October. The Soviet Union also threatened to join the boycott. Avery Brundage, president of the International Olympic Committee, said the Olympics would take place no matter how many nations withdraw their teams. When hearing of the African Council vote, Brundage remarked: "We're not involved in politics."

Teeth Grinders

◈ More than one in 20 adults and three in 20 children grind their teeth during sleep. Researchers state that night grinding wears down the teeth, loosens fillings or caps, and causes a loss of bone supporting the teeth. The studies show that grinders grind their teeth about a minute on an average for each hour of sleep. The commonly held notion that the phenomenon is a symptom of emotional disturbance has been discounted. Tests showed no psychiatric and psychological differences between grinders and nongrinders. The cause for night grinding is still being sought.

Low Birthrate

◈ There were 3.5 million babies born in the United States last year, a drop of 19 percent from 1961, when births reached a peak of 4.3 million. It is believed that in the near future further drops may be expected in both the number of babies born and the rate at which they are born. A drastic change in the child-bearing patterns of the modern American woman is being blamed for the drop. Today's woman has her babies earlier in marriage and also stops having children later in life. Instead of four, five or six children, there are two or

three children to each American family, statistically speaking.

Too Many Pills

◈ Both doctors and pill manufacturers are under fire today because of the greatly increased use of prescription pills—pills to combat obesity, anti-pregnancy pills and so on. Often, it is charged, the pills are prescribed without even the most superficial examination of the patients. And, while the peddling of pills is most lucrative to doctors and drug companies, there are grave dangers for the users of the pills. For example, it is claimed that use of some anti-pregnancy pills may produce hazardous blood clots and even strokes. Some obesity pills, it is charged, contain chemicals that are habit-forming and, in some circumstances, positively poisonous. Vast supplies of one diet pill were seized in Texas by government agents recently on the ground that the users were experiencing sleeplessness, nervousness and symptoms of heart failure, according to a UPI dispatch.

Disturbing Signs

◈ According to *Nature* magazine of last November, a British member of parliament criticized his government for failure to make thorough investigation of the expected path of the asteroid Icarus, which is expected to pass close to our planet in June of this year—within four million miles, that is. The fear is expressed that there could be errors in the computations of the astronomers, and that a collision could be disastrous to the earth. The Bible, at Luke 21:25, 26, foretold accurately that men would become "faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth."

Unsafe for President

◈ President Johnson reportedly will not ride through the streets to the Democratic National Convention next summer, as United States presidents have safely done through most of the nation's history. America is just not a safe place anymore. Instead, a helicopter will land the president on the roof of the convention hall, and, to confuse possible snipers, five helicopters will be used, with the one carrying the president indistinguishable from the others. *The Oregonian*, February 14, stated that "when the president of the United States has to be sneaked into a city to participate in a democratic process, and when a posse of citizens must be organized to try to keep the peace, the country is in a sad situation."

DO YOU VALUE TRUTH HIGHLY?

Are you looking for truth? "God's word IS truth!" Why, then, is there so much confusion in religious thinking? Can so many contradictory religions provide any basis at all for world unity? Can such conflicting religious concepts be ecumenically resolved? The Bible itself says No! Only the truth can set men free. (John 8:32) If you value that truth you can find it yourself in your own copy of the Bible. Read it with *The Watchtower*. It will be a new and rewarding experience.

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